1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

SOCIAL CULTURE

THE second major division of Kaska culture to be described, is derived from those ideas and activities which reflect the individual's adjustment to other individuals. In many situations such adjustment is essential for the execution of adaptive behaviors but it also represents the solution of additional problems arising out of interpersonal relations. Social culture has been divided into three subdivisions: interpersonal organization, ranging from the family to local groups; interpersonal relations in the larger society, including property, governmental, legal, sexual, and other relations between individuals; and those interpersonal relations entering into the lifecycle.

ORGANIZATION

Family

The nuclear family in Kaska society consists of a married couple and their true or adopted children. Such a group is sometimes augmented by the presence of additional relatives, as for example, an aged or widowed grandparent, an orphaned grandchild, or the orphaned children of a mother's sister or father's brother. A family may also contain temporarily the unmarried siblings of either spouse. The Kaska family corresponds closely to the settlement described above in which the group occupies a single residence. If more than one family live in a settlement, they usually occupy separate dwellings.

Authority in the family is ideally invested in the husband, although actually the wife is consulted in all important considerations and may also originate action by influencing her husband's decisions. The authority of the husband is maintained even if the family happens to contain a grandparent. Although under conditions of matrilocal residence, a father may offer advice to his son-in-law, such advice is not given in an authoritative fashion and, once the marriage is established, does not dispute the authority of the husband. The importance of the father is also reflected in the fact that, despite the system of matrilineal moieties, family names follow the patrilineal line.

Functionally the family is of great importance, constituting the primary economic unit of the society. It is able to provide its own capital goods and to exploit the environment in order to secure necessary consumer goods. Cooperation tends to be restricted to the family, but even here it cannot be demanded except from a young, unmarried son or daughter. A young married couple will generally trap together, but once children are born, the man will look to others for trapline companionship and assistance. Helpers secured in this way enter what may be described as a *protégé* relationship. That is, the partner is often a related or unrelated youth who is taught the art of trapping, freely loaned traps, and extended the privilege of using the trapping territory. Such a partnership is founded primarily on congeniality and is readily dissolved. Sometimes a family takes along a mature girl or young widow. The girl helps the wife in household duties, but may also trap, using resources which are loaned her by the family with whom she resides. "They live on you. They get no money and live on you, helping till they get husband."

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12
Dease River
Tselon

casionally reached a diameter of 30 feet and accomodated several families, smaller structures built in this style and housing only one or two families occurred more frequently. Birch-bark and grass-mat buildings were unknown. A Kechika River man appeared vaguely familiar with the snowhouse but would venture no description of its form or construction. Women erected houses and were believed to construct better structures than men. Qualities governing selection of a dwelling site included "hard" (i.e., dry) ground and accessibility to water. Dry wood could be found nearly everyplace. People never excavated the ground of a house site.

Within a dwelling women occupied the area nearest the entry, while a husband had his place toward the rear. Daughters slept near the mother, sons farther back from the entry. Infants rested in skin hammocks suspended over the mothers' sleeping places. Along the Kechika River, at least, babies used hammocks of plaited, split spruce roots lined with skins. Specially constructed fireplaces or sleeping platforms did not occur. People lived on a carpet of spruce brush and at night covered themselves with robes of sewn marten and ground-hog pelts or plaited rabbit-skin. Grizzly bear robes, because of their size and warmth, provided especially desirable blankets. Some people used pillows made by packing duck or partridge feathers in a smoked skin bag.

The sweat house, built for the use of both sexes, was the only type of non-residential structure. Hemispherical in shape and about four feet high it contained a roof opening designed to permit the escape of excess heat and steam. No ceremonial enclosures occurred.

Both sexes showed equal skill in kindling fire by the strike-a-light method.[7] One informant denied the use of fire drills (S) but another man constructed a bow drill which, he claimed, had been displaced from the culture because of its poorer efficiency compared to the use of flint and pyrites (WT). Boys and girls commonly sought fuel with some assistance from adults. In winter when camp moved women carried fire on glowing poles 15 or 18 inches long. Fire kept through the night if banked with earth or ashes.

Tselona. Winter dwellings conformed to the usual two types: conical with a framework of poles and inverted V-shaped. Roofing utilized spruce brush, moss, and sod but never grass thatch. Occasionally a household possessed sufficient skins to cover a conical lodge. In summer the Indians did not live in houses and only rain impelled them to put up hasty lean-tos. Surprisingly the construction of sweat houses met with denial. In the

[7] A tale collected by Teit tells how Bear's monopoly of the fire stone was broken by a little bird who visited Bear's lodge to warm himself. While picking lice from the Bear the bird broke the latter's belt and flew off with the stone, passing this object to a number of waiting animals. Last to receive the prize was Fox whose flight to a high mountain exhausted Bear. "Fox broke up the fire-stone on the top of the mountain, and threw the fragments a piece to each tribe. Thus the many tribes all over the earth obtained fire; *and this is why there is fire in the rocks and woods everywhere now.*" As a result of losing fire Bear made a hole in the earth to keep himself warm in winter—the origin of the bear's den! Teit, *Kaska Tales* (1917), 443–444.

It will be recalled that the Upper Liard Indians made fire with the strike-a-light method. The Tlingit (including the Chilkat) used fire drills, including the bow type, as well as percussion methods of fire making. Drucker, *Culture Element Distributions: XXVI, Northwest Coast* (1950), 202.

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12
Upper Liard

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

FAMILY AND KIN

UPPER LIARD KASKA. While the nuclear or conjugal family certainly served [594] important functions in the life of the aboriginal Kaska Indians, this unit was normally incorporated in a larger extended family that linked a woman and her daughters. 596 Typically such an extended family included a man, his wife, perhaps her sisters and their husbands, married daughters and their husbands, unmarried sons, and the 592 unmarried children of the married daughters. An extended family often constituted the microcosmic band, to which additional unrelated individuals of either sex attached themselves. In winter the band or extended family sometimes shared a large conical house, although households containing two sisters and their families of procreation were also common. The distinction between nuclear family, extended family, and household is illustrated in Figure 6. Here the broken lines (enclosing individuals A, B, C, D, G, H, and I) indicate a household in which A, B, and G are members of one nuclear family and C, D, H, and I belong to another. In this diagram E, F, J, and K constitute another and adjacent household. While the children, J and K, would probably spend most of their time in their parent's dwelling they would be equally at home in the household of the maternal grandparents. Daughters tended to establish households quite soon after marriage, perhaps because of the strong avoidance governing the relations of a man and his mother-in-law. Not all microcosmic bands conformed to the matrilocal extended 621 family here outlined. Sometimes a band formed around the nucleus of two brothers and their wives. Daughters on occasion also left their parents' band after marriage to take up residence with their husbands' kin. Bands tended to be fluid among most Arctic-drainage Athapaskan groups and few pressures could be relied upon to maintain any particular type of organization. A man lacking skill in hunting might join with his wife's family, expecting the latter's brother or father to furnish a dependable source of meat. Should his unproductive presence come to be resented, friction might send him to rejoin his own parental group. If his skill or "luck" improved he would be able to fulfill the ideal expectations of a son-in-law or might decide to go off with his wife to shift for himself. Adoption, which was widely practiced, also complicated the composition of Indian groupings. Orphans as well as children whose parents still lived were adopted, 597 the latter being somewhat better treated than parentless children. It is interesting to note that a parent who subsequently wanted an adopted child returned had to offer payment except in cases when the foster parents were guilty of mistreatment.

Following are relationship terms employed by the Upper Liard Indians: 601

(e)stsil'e: my MoFa, FaFa, FaSiSo (m.s.), WiFa (m.s.), HuFa (w.s.).
(e)stsuc': my MoMo, FaMo, FaSi, FaSiDa (m.s.), WiMo (m.s.), HuMo (w.s.).
ets': my Fa.
ens': my Mo, MoSi.
(e)ets': my FaBr.
sesc': my MoBr, SiSo.

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12

Upper Liard

601

(e)stcus'e: my So, BrSo.
(e)stsu'e: my Da, BrDa, SiDa, also stepdaughter.
gutli'e: my eBr; also, if older than ego, FaBrSo, MoSiSo, WiSiHu.
(e)tcit'le: my yBr; also, if younger than ego, FaBrSo, MoSiSo, WiSiHu.
(e)tsa'te: my eSi; also, if older than ego, FaBrDa, MoSiDa, HuBrWi.
(e)ta'tse: my ySi; also, if younger than ego, FaBrDa, MoSiDa, HuBrWi.
(a)sla': my MoBrSo, FaSiSo (w.s.), HuBr (w.s.), WiBr (m.s.), SiHu (m.s.), WiSi (m.s.).
ekle': my MoBrDa, FaSiDa (w.s.), HuSi (w.s.) SiHu(w.s.), BrWi (w.s.).
(e)sil'on: my Wi.
se'lige: my Hu.
(e)spa': my WiSi (m.s.), BrWi (m.s.).
(e)stca': my SoSo, DaSo, SoDa, DaDa, SoWi.
sonase': my DaHu.
(e)sya'e: my stepson.

592
596

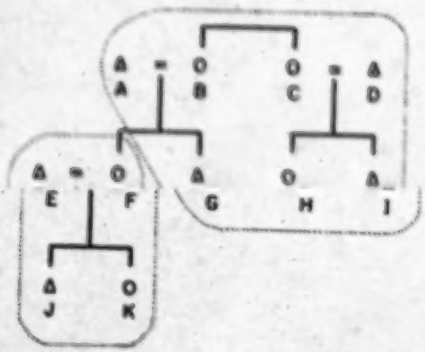

FIG. 6. Household and Extended Family Patterns.

601 The outstanding features of this kin-term system, which will be compared with kinship usages obtaining among adjacent Athapaskan tribes, may be briefly summarized. The present tense is used as a matter of preference.

1. Cousin terminology is of the Crow type with parallel and cross cousins called by different terms. MoBrSo and FaSiSo are called by different terms (man speaking) as well as MoBrDa and FaSiDa. A man classifies his FaSiSo with his grandfather, his FaSiDa with his grandmother. A woman classifies these cousins with her siblings-in-law, a feature consistent with asymmetrical cross-cousin marriage.[1]

[582]

2. Bifurcate merging terminology identifies Mo and MoSi, So and BrSo.
3. Generation-type terminology results in the identification of Da, BrDa, and SiDa.
4. A reciprocal term applies between the MoBr and his SiSo.
5. The wife's and husband's parents are classified with grandparents. FaSi and FaSiDa are also grouped with the latter relatives. These failures to recognize collaterality represent further instances of bifurcate merging terminology.

[1] See below, p. 131.

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12
Kechika River
Tsetona

1. Crow-type cousin terminology is confused by the extension of sibling terms to FaSiSo and MoBrDa, as well as to parallel cousins. FaSiDa and MoBrSo are, however, distinguished from other cousins, the last being terminologically identified with the MoBr.

2. Bifurcate collateral terminology distinguishes between Mo, MoSi, and FaSi, as well as between Fa, FaBr, and MoBr. However, FaSi is merged with the grandmother.

3. Bifurcate merging terminology identifies the following pairs: Da, BrDa and So, BrSo. However, SiDa and SiSo are classified as grandchildren.

4. No reciprocal term operates between MoBr and SiSo. The maternal uncle term, as already indicated, is extended to include the MoBrSo.

5. Parents-in-law are classified with grandparents.

6. As in the Dease River basin the son's spouse is classified like a grandchild; DaHu is terminologically isolated.

7. There is only a single grandchild term, extended to include SiSo, SiDa, and SoWi.

Tselona. A common social unit among the Tselona was the dual family household, which according to the informant usually consisted of "two brothers," their wives, and children. Kinship terms of the Tselona Indians are given below.

asta: my MoFa, FaFa, FaBr.
(i)suu(e): my MoMo, FaMo, WiMo (m.s.).
ete: my Fa.
ane: my Mo.
ade: my FaSi, MoSi.
sane: my MoBr, SiSo, SiDa.
setcua: my So, BrSo.

---

setca: my SoWi (term also applied to grandchildren?).
sada: my sweetheart.

We did not obtain terms for grandchildren.

The following features may be pointed out: (1) Cousin terms are of the Hawaiian type, with all cross and parallel cousins called by the same terms as those used for siblings. This is the pattern among the Sekani studied by Jenness and also obtains among the Fort Nelson Slave. Sibling terms are extended to BrDa and BrSo by woman speakers. (2) Bifurcate merging results in the terminological identification of Mo and MoSi. (3) Bifurcate merging results in the classification together of the following pairs: Da, BrDa (m.s.) and So, BrSo (m.s.). However, SiSo and SiDa are distinguished from lineal descendants and classed together. One informant said that a woman calls her SiDa "daughter." In distinction to male usage a woman addresses her BrDa and BrSo by sibling terms. (4) There is no reciprocal usage between MoBr and SiSo or SiDa. (5) A mother-in-law is grouped with the grandmother but the father-in-law is terminologically isolated. (6) DaHu is isolated and perhaps so is SoWi. (7) Grandchildren terms were not secured from the Whitewater speaker but at Fort Graham, according to Jenness, there is only one grandchild term. It is not extended to SoWi. Note that children of a wife's sister are merged with lineal descendants, as are the children of a husband's brother. These usages are congenial with normal polygyny and the levirate respectively. A man calls WiBrSo "sister's child." This is a pattern correlating high with exchange of sisters as a form of marriage. The same form of marriage can explain why the WifeDa is called MoBr if one assumes (in view of a lack of factual data) that she in turn calls her FaWife by the term of MoBr. Under sister exchange the FaWife would be the MoBr. The terminological identity of brother's children (woman speaking) and husband's sister's children can also be explained as following from the pattern of marriage by exchange of sisters. Along with such a pattern a husband's sister's children would correspond to brother's children.